

## Chehalis River Basin Flood Authority

**Work Session – 9:00 a.m.**

Montesano City Hall  
112 N. Main St., Montesano,, WA

### **March 15, 2012 - Meeting Notes**

**Board Members Present:** Jim Cook, City of Aberdeen; Edna Fund, City of Centralia; Julie Balmelli-Powe, City of Chehalis; Karen Valenzuela, Thurston County Commissioner; Alan Carr, Town of Bucoda; Ken Estes, City of Montesano; Lionel Pinn, City of Napavine; Dan Thompson, City of Oakville; Vickie Raines, City of Montesano/Cosmopolis; Terry Willis, Grays Harbor County Commissioner; Ron Averill, Lewis County Commissioner

**Consultants Present:** Jim Kramer, Ruckelshaus Center; Larry Karpack, WSE; Ray Walton, WEST Consultants

**Others Present:** Please see sign in sheet

#### **Materials/Handouts:**

- Agenda
- Memo from Greg Hueckel re: Project Committee Work and Next Steps
- CRBFA Project Subcommittee Master Projects Matrix
- Matrix of Potential Projects to Remove
- Memo from WSE re: Satsop River Channel and Cross Section Comparisons

#### **1. Call to Order and Welcome**

Chairman Raines called the meeting to order at 9:09 a.m. Mayor Estes welcomed everyone.

#### **2. Introductions**

Self-introductions were made by all attending.

Chairman Raines stated she would like to add Mr. Paul Pickett from Department of Ecology to the agenda after Item 8.

#### **3. Overview of the morning work session**

Ms. Fowler stated there would be an update on the H & H modeling; Mr. Boettcher would train the Flood Authority on iPRMT, the Authority's more robust website; and Mr. Kramer would update the Authority on the OFM report and what the next steps will be.

#### **4. Training on iPRMT**

Mr. Boettcher stated the website (iPRMT) is a repository for all the science and other information connected to the Flood Authority's work. Currently, information is being sent to the Flood Authority in a variety of ways and iPRMT will allow that information to be accessed quicker and easier. Mr. Hueckel and Ms. Fowler have editing rights and Ms. Fund and Mr. Vander Stoep have editing rights for the FAQs.

Mr. Boettcher stated he would collect all the materials that the Flood Authority has reviewed and authorized and post them to this site. All materials are cross-referenced. Mr. Boettcher asked for help

in documenting what is missing so he can get it on the site. The first round of FAQs will be out soon. Currently the FAQ tab is not available to everyone.

Mr. Boettcher explained the login procedure. The first time log in requires the creation of a user name and password and individuals create their own. All log-in information will be available on the Flood Authority website and on all three county websites.

Ms. Fowler stated all of the projects and studies are under the Projects and Studies tab. The Library tab includes everything else that is out there.

Commissioner Willis asked if the public can post comments to this site. She was concerned that if there was a public disclosure request (PDR) that this site would become part of that request. She would not want to have to look through the entire site to satisfy a PDR.

Mr. Boettcher stated no public comments can be posted. He noted that the Gateway Pacific Terminal in Whatcom County has been very controversial. There have been no PDRs because people can go to the iPRMT site and get any documentation they need as well as updates, et cetera.

Mr. Treichler asked if comments from a public hearing would go on the site. Mr. Boettcher stated they would be in the meeting notes.

Commissioner Averill stated the notes are not verbatim but a summary of what occurred.

Chairman Raines stated generally a public hearing is on one topic and questions and answers are recorded. Mr. Thompson asked if these meetings are recorded. Chairman Raines stated they are not required to be recorded and some meeting sites do not have that capability.

Mr. Johnson stated if there is a public hearing and if it is recorded, the transcriber will not do a verbatim discussion. Unless there is a requirement under state law then the notes that are approved are the record. Written comments become part of the record and are available to the public.

Mr. Boettcher said he would circulate the sign in instructions for the iPRMT site following the meeting to the Flood Authority distribution list.

## **5. OFM Report**

Mr. Kramer presented a Power Point that explained the process for the OFM report and input. The required elements for the report are:

- Water Retention
- Corps Levee Project
- Alternatives for I-5 and Critical Facilities
- Other Alternatives
- Benefit Cost
- Decision Process and Responsible Parties

Mr. Kramer stated that in compiling this report, the Ruckelshaus Center is not bringing new information to this report but sifting through reports that have occurred and statements of fact. His report will need

to be succinct with lots of graphics, different alternatives and comparisons, and the website will be referenced.

There has not been a meeting yet on the cost benefit. The EES Phase 2B study can be looked at to see if there are new numbers for what has been done in the past.

Commissioner Averill stated there are many definitions of cost benefit. The Corps' definition is restrictive. When FCS did the cost benefit analysis there was a problem because FEMA used residential properties. FCS's analysis was ten times more than FEMA's because they included business and commercial properties.

Mr. Kramer stated he won't say what is right and wrong but will give the range so people can see the differences. The Ruckelshaus Center is a neutral body – it will report various ideas that have surfaced so the Flood Authority can make decisions. His hope is that the report will be a neutral fact-based piece that everyone can use.

Mr. Johnson stated the feds use a regimented process for cost benefit analysis and it is out dated. He asked if Mr. Kramer will do a range of those: contingency evaluation, logical function, et cetera. Mr. Kramer stated there is not much more money to do a detailed analysis. He is using the University of Washington for help and he couldn't answer Mr. Johnson's question. EES and other reports are being used.

#### Overall Process

- Collection of existing and new information – now to May
- Technical analysis of alternatives – early May
- Policy workshop – mid May
- Draft report – early June
- Final Report – end of July

Mr. Thompson asked if there will be a preview of these issues so they can be discussed with jurisdictions' councils. Mr. Kramer stated that could be done with a technical workshop and he could have draft materials before the May meeting. The end point is July so there are three points where the jurisdictions can weigh in: May, June and July.

Mr. Kramer stated the schedule does not include public meetings. This can be discussed at the April meeting. There is no plan for a series of public meetings and there is nothing in the budget for them.

Mr. Kramer then reviewed the report scope.

- Basin wide focus
- Catastrophic floods
- More frequent floods
- Ecological implications

Mr. Kramer stated there are concerns with the catastrophic floods and also the rather more frequent flood events. This discussion will be in the report.

#### Basin Areas

Mr. Kramer showed a map of the Basin. He looked at ways to divide up the basin and how he pictures the watershed. The communities and effects of flooding are quite different. He wanted to present the communities in a way so it is not just a bunch of numbers but shows who is affected and the character of the project. He asked for the Flood Authority's reaction to this and if it made sense.

Commissioner Valenzuela asked how the five areas compare to basin-wide. Mr. Kramer stated there are projects that can affect the whole system and other projects that are localized. He wanted a way to describe that. To lump all the areas together does not adequately describe what happens in certain areas.

Commissioner Valenzuela stated the Flood Authority has talked about a basin-wide solution. Because of the graph she asked if there is a basin-wide solution.

Mr. Kramer stated he believes a basin-wide solution will be a combination of actions and the Conservation Districts are interested in this. This will be a topic for May – how does the Authority see individual projects and put them into a basin-wide solution.

Commissioner Averill stated the Authority has looked at the WRIAs as upper, middle and lower basin. Mr. Kramer's graph includes two major tributaries but not the Satsop and the Wynoochee. He is not sure what is driving this particular split.

Mr. Kramer stated he has been listening to people and he has not heard a lot of discussion that is going way up on the tributaries in Grays Harbor County and there are no projects up there. There are some issues at the bottom of the basin and in Aberdeen but he has not heard the need to split those up. If he were to look at technical watershed drainage it would be split up more. He's looking at how to describe the distinctions of the communities.

Commissioner Averill stated Mr. Kramer shows dikes and levees in the corridor but not those in Cosmopolis and Aberdeen. Mr. Kramer stated he had not heard of proposals on those.

#### Potential Projects for Analysis

- Water retention
- Fish enhancement
- Corps levees
- Alternatives for I-5 and critical facilities
- Bridges
- Other alternatives: critter pads, buffers, buyouts, flood proofing
- Land use
- Forestry
- Sediment management

Mr. Kramer stated 'Other Alternatives' would come out of the Project Committee work and the Conservation District work. Other ideas not coming from the project list should be sent to Mr. Kramer very soon.

Mr. Pinn stated he likes the three-piece basin split. It is more generalized and he doesn't think it is necessary to break it down into detailed sections.

Mr. Kramer stated there has been a lot of work done in Thurston County that has no benefit in the upper main stem. When he looked at three splits it lumped things together that were very different from each other. He thinks conceptually this is a sensible way to look at basin-wide activities that will have different impacts in different places.

Mr. Cook stated Mr. Kramer had spoken to more people than anyone else has and he has broken down the impacts regarding flooding. He thinks the Authority should defer to his judgment.

Chairman Raines thanked Mr. Kramer for his time and effort. She stated the workshops with Mr. Kramer will be on May 17 and 18; the location has not yet been determined.

## **6. Break**

The Chair recessed the meeting at 10:38 and reconvened at 10:50.

## **7. Project Matrix/Next Steps**

Mr. Hueckel presented a Power Point on the Project Subcommittee's work. The committee's purpose is to develop a master inventory of flood-related projects in the Chehalis Basin. Everything he was showing is on the iPRMT website, including the Power Point.

The goal is to make sure the project list is correct and presents a matrix of projects that reflects the Authority's priorities to provide flood relief and protection in the basin.

The projects were separated into nine functional projects. There is another list of potential projects to remove for a number various reasons: they were repetitive, they were completed, or a jurisdiction didn't consider them a priority any longer.

Mr. Hueckel stated the matrix of projects is not prioritized because this is an inventory of projects that the local jurisdictions deem important. There are a myriad of funding sources and what could be a high priority for one funding source may be a low priority for another. The committee did not want to bias projects that might be funded in the future by prioritizing them.

The request to the Flood Authority is to provide recommendations on:

- Proposed goal
- Overall approach
- Are there additional projects for the project matrix
- Are there additional sources that should be reviewed for additional projects

### **More Details for the Project Matrix**

Upon approval of the approach and scope of the Project Matrix, the goal of the project subcommittee will be to add:

- More detailed description, including precise location
- Estimated cost
- Flood benefit
- Stages of readiness

The subcommittee wants confirmation from the Authority that it is working in the right direction and has the right projects. The details can come later. There are 138 projects. To implement all of them without thinking about what it will do to others would not be a good thing to do. These projects are independent but when they are put into a suite of projects that becomes the next step to implementing the projects.

Mr. Kramer stated if these are to be put into the OFM report he needs whatever the Authority is going to produce by the middle of April. If there are ten flood proofing projects and they will cost \$10 million you don't need other projects. He needs that information by the middle of April to get it into the report.

Mr. Vander Stoep stated to have a list of 138 projects without knowing how they intersect with each other, and without cost benefit, it will be difficult to get information on a group of projects to Mr. Kramer.

Mr. Hueckel stated he knew there would be another step when suites of projects were discussed but we needed to get here first. We have the project list. He is not sure that the Authority has the tool to do what he is asking because the list came from a number of different places. Some of that lies with Mr. Karpack and the modeling. He asked if the subcommittee can drill down to address the disjointedness nature of the list and get the originators of the projects into a workshop. He needs experts in the room to figure out how they go together.

Mr. Johnson stated the most cost effective projects must be identified. They can't be put together with an analysis of what the project does for mitigation – upstream and downstream – costs, etc. Once that is done for the individual projects then they can be looked at for similar benefits and put into suites.

Mr. Kramer stated there are 30 days to do something. The Project Committee is good for policy decisions but he needs direction from the heads of governments and Public Works directors to make this happen very soon.

Mr. Hueckel understood what needs to be done are: get comments on the list to him, go to the Public Works folks and find out which projects go with which jurisdictions, and provide answers to the questions that would provide more detail about the projects. They can be sent to Mr. Hueckel no later than March 29.

## **8. H & H Modeling**

Mr. Karpack presented a Power Point that included an overview of today's discussion and model development.

WSE is under contract to the Flood Authority for the Newaukum River, the main stem from Montesano to Aberdeen, the Skookumchuck River (with WEST), and the Satsop River. The Flood Authority has asked them to examine a number of alternatives, including upstream retention, part of the Corps Twin Cities Project, and various flood relief alternatives (along with WEST) including the I-5 protection project, bridge removal or modifications, Skookumchuck railroad trestle, land use, impact of other structures, conceptual level high flow bypass, and sediment management.

WEST's work includes the main stem from Grand Mound to Porter, Porter to Montesano, Doty to Pe Ell, part of the Satsop River work, and hydrology work under contract to the Corps.

Ms. Powe asked if fill could be removed when modeling fill in the basin. Mr. Karpack stated fill can be added or removed. If fill is put into the model then an adjustment needs to be made. Fill can be added to storage areas in a model. He stated it becomes complicated when small fills are added, such as a small levee or a pad for one commercial building. That amount of fill would have little effect on the modeling because of the scale to which this model was built.

Mr. Walton stated the resolution in the model is 1000 feet; at Doty it is 500 feet. When you think in terms of what you can analyze, think in those numbers. A small culvert will have a local impact but it will not show up in the big picture.

Commissioner Willis asked if the model shows wind and tidal influence. Mr. Walton stated there is no wind in this model.

Commissioner Averill stated the WSDOT project will make I-5 become a levee. Will the model answer a question about what will happen on either side of the freeway?

Mr. Kramer stated this was talked about so it will be addressed. All the alternatives coming before the Authority then can be modeled by Mr. Karpack or Mr. Walton, or at least they will have reviewed them. They are only one source. WSDOT will use this model for their design project.

## **9. Water Quality**

Mr. Paul Pickett spoke to the temperature tidbits. Anchor did a study with nine sensors in the river and DOE was asked to take over the monitoring of the tidbits. A status report was given a couple of weeks ago. DOE has an annual planning process and they would like to continue the monitoring until the end of October. By that time the temperatures drop below all the standards and DOE will have been able to gather another low flow season of record.

Some sensors are being lost and some are eroding away or covered with sediment. They need maintenance. The monitoring will continue until the end of October but the meters may not be pulled for some time after that. He thought about leaving them and pulling them later and then doing a post calibration in the DOE labs. For efficiency, DOE could wait until the end of the project and do it all at once. Officially the project goes through June 2013; if it is a wet winter it may go into late 2013. He asked that after pulling the meters and reporting, did the Authority want DOE to continue the work.

## **10. Public Comment**

Mr. Tim Hamilton stated the projects (the Flood Authority's list to legislature on recommended capital projects for flood mitigation) should be reviewed by the Flood Authority and the Tribe. He thought the citizens should have the opportunity to vote.

Mr. Hamilton made a graph of the projects. It showed some measures are mitigating for individual properties, such as raising homes. That does not help in the basin. The Chehalis Comp Plan identifies constriction at a bridge that backs up water onto the reservation. If that bridge is removed the constriction moves down to another constriction. The report talks about risks with unknown effects.

Mr. Hamilton stated this document is going to OFM in 30 days. It raises questions from those who are not with you every day. They are going to ask if you know what you are doing. He asked if this list

provides protection for him. Projects cannot be funded without taxes; the Authority is asking him to pay a tax to help pay for this. He suggested the Authority read this list and ask yourselves if this is what you really wanted to ask us today?

Mr. Frank Kersh, Aberdeen, thanked the Flood Authority for all its hard work.

**11. Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 12:16 p.m.